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Director of Central Intelligence

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ARGENTINA: Measures To Control the Military

President Alfonsin's moves to curb the military continue to gain momentum, and the armed forces remain too weak to challenge him for now. [redacted] 3.5(c)

Alfonsin's promotion of officers to head the three military services will force nearly 40 general officers—more than half of the general officer corps in the Army alone—into retirement over the next several weeks. The president also has made changes in the high command that subordinate the new commanders to the civilian Defense Minister. [redacted] 3.5(c)

Earlier this week Congress repealed the previous military government's amnesty law designed to protect officers involved in antisubversive activities. This enables Alfonsin to proceed with his plans to prosecute former junta members for human rights abuses. Press reports state that the congressional action also has encouraged the judiciary to launch more extensive investigations. [redacted] 3.5(c)

3.3(b)(1) [redacted] senior officers have accepted the appointments and retirements. Although lower ranking officers have remained calm, they are concerned that further judicial inquiries into human rights cases eventually will cause unrest. [redacted] 3.5(c)

Comment: The military largely anticipated the retirements and structural changes. Last year some officers pushed for a more thorough purge of the high command in the wake of the defeat in the Falklands, and they probably welcome these initiatives. [redacted] 3.5(c)

Alfonsin, however, may have to contend with a reinvigorated judiciary determined to find out who is responsible for the disappearance of 6,000 to 15,000 persons under military rule. Even if he wanted to, the President might not be able to moderate civil actions or inquiries that could lead to more extensive investigations of the military. [redacted] 3.5(c)

Nevertheless, even disgruntled officers appear to have no figure around whom to rally. They probably will have little choice but to await the outcome of trials and see if more serious opposition develops. [redacted] 3.5(c)

3.5(c) [redacted]

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